

**Executive Committee for Highway Safety  
Older Driver Safety  
Working Group Meeting Minutes – Mtg. #8**

**November 28, 2006**

**Location:**

AARP State Office, Raleigh, NC @ 11:00 a.m.

**Attending:**

Jane Stutts, Chair	UNC Highway Safety Research Center
Suzanne LaFollette-Black	NC AARP
Cliff Braam	NC DOT Traffic Engineering & Safety Systems Branch
Phyllis Bridgeman	NC DHHS Division of Aging and Adult Services
Sherry Creech	NC DMV Driver License Medical Review Branch
Frank Hackney	NC Governor's Highway Safety Program
Janice Huff	NC Medical Society
Helen Savage	NC AARP
Bill Turner	NC AARP
Carol Williams	NC Assistive Technology Program

**Minutes:**

Jane welcomed those attending and reviewed the agenda for the day's meeting, which was primarily devoted to planning for a senior driving safety and mobility website. Before beginning discussion of the website, she provided a brief update on the four strategies that had been drafted by the group. Two of these strategies (Improve Signage at Non-Standard Interchange Approaches, and Identify Hazardous Intersections and Improve their Safety) were presented to the ECHS at its quarterly meeting in October and were approved. Plans are to present the remaining two strategies (Improve Roadway and Driving Environment: Building Capacity, and Increase Public Awareness of Issues and Resources) at the next scheduled ECHS meeting on January 16.

Jane noted that the FHWA workshops that are integral to the "Building Capacity" strategy have been scheduled for three locations across the state during the first week in February. There was also some discussion of whether it was appropriate for the group to begin planning for a website before the "Increase Public Awareness" strategy was officially approved by the ECHS. Cliff Braam indicated that this should not be a problem, especially given the resources within the group to follow through on the strategy.

Phyllis Bridgeman indicated that the Division on Aging and Adult Services had responded positively to the idea of a senior driver safety and mobility website, and that there are plans to include it as one of the 40 objectives in the 2007-2011 State Aging Services Plan. DAAS is

coordinating the development of that plan, which should be finalized in the spring of 2007. Jane and Phyllis will be preparing a brief rationale and description of the website objective for inclusion in the Plan.

Phyllis also indicated that DHHS is in the process of revamping its own website and has a “soft moratorium” in place for website development. However, it appears that because the sponsorship of the website is broader than DHHS and technical support for designing the site could be arranged through other sources, there is good reason to believe that DHHS will be flexible and the Division of Aging and Adult Services will be allowed to host the site. DHHS would have to review and approve the site content, but it is not anticipated that this would be a problem. The DHHS Public Affairs graphics staff may be able to help create an “identity” for the senior driver safety activities of the coalition (but not for the coalition itself) Based on an initial consultation with DHHS, Phyllis encouraged us to develop a site that is content-focused rather than a site that is branded with the Coalition’s name or logo (such as the “GrandDriver” program). She also indicated that even though DHHS may assume official responsibility for the site, it might have both a dhhs.gov address as well as an alias url (e.g., seniordriversafety) and be presented as an activity of the SDSC and its partnering organizations. At some point, outside funding (e.g., from a grant) may be needed to build the actual website, in addition to any assistance that NC DOT’s Information and Technology office may be able to provide.

Attendees were asked to brainstorm **target audiences** for the website. A long list was generated (see Attachment A), but those present agreed that the site should not try to be all things to all people, but instead should target

- Senior drivers,
- Families and friends of senior drivers, and
- Health care providers, including physicians, occupational therapists, and social workers.

On the side, note was made that the site should avoid being an “alphabet soup” of acronyms (i.e., spell out occupational therapist rather than using OT), and the type face should be clear and large.

In discussing **how the site might be marketed** to these audiences, certainly we would want partnering organizations (AARP, AAA, NC Medical Society, etc.) to link to the website and utilize existing aging-related networks. But it was also noted that print materials (e.g., pamphlets, or a simple bookmark advertising the website) can be very effective for conveying information to seniors. For example, information about the site might be sent by the DMV to older drivers prior to renewing their license, or included in AARP and AAA newsletter articles or direct mailings. Other suggested avenues for getting out information about the site included pharmacies and grocery stores, churches, doctors’ offices, driver safety education classes, and senior centers.

Even though it was acknowledged that many of today’s older adults are not computer literate, this percentage is increasing rapidly. Meanwhile, it was noted that the site can still benefit older adults by making information available to their adult children and other family members. Also, most senior centers and libraries have ready access to computers and the internet.

The group next discussed possible **content** for the website (see Attachment B), and specific individuals were identified to begin assimilating available information and materials on the various topic areas. These assignments are identified in the Attachment. In general, discussion emphasized the need for presenting information in a fun and positive manner.

Phyllis indicated that as material for the website is identified, it could be posted on a password-protected website so that other members of the group could review it. Phyllis will follow up with the NCDOT IT staff as needed for help with the graphics and presentation. Before moving forward, however, it will be helpful to obtain the ECHS's official support for the Coalition's work on the website. There was also some discussion of setting up separate working groups for the various aspects of the website (content, overall "look," promotion and financial support), which will be discussed further at the Coalition's January meeting.

With regard to other committee business, Suzanne LaFollette-Black had prepared a short summary of the four Mobility and Safe Driving forums hosted by the Coalition, emphasizing the broad networking opportunities afforded by the sessions and the continued positive outcomes. Jane Stutts apologized for running out of time before addressing the issue of identifying and assisting high risk drivers, but noted that Kristen Bovid, from the UNC Department of Government, was busy compiling information on the driver medical review process that should be helpful and available to the group by late January.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the full Coalition/Working Group was scheduled for **Friday, January 19**, in Raleigh, from 11 am – 1:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch at 1:20 pm.

### **Action Items**

See Attachment B assignments for identifying candidate materials and resources for presentation on the website.

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**Target Audiences for a Senior Driver Safety and Mobility Website**

Senior Drivers

Families of Senior Drivers

Health Care Providers

Physicians

Social Workers

OTs

Community at large

Agencies – Seniors / Transportation

Media – TV / Newspaper / Radio / etc.

Law Enforcement

Professional Engineering Associations

Colleges / Universities / Community Colleges / Medical Schools / Researchers

DMV License Examiners

**ATTACHMENT B**  
**Website Content (preliminary topic areas)**

<b>Topic Area</b>	<b>Lead Contacts</b>
Driving self-tests	H. Savage
Exercises for mobility	C. Williams
Age-related functional changes affecting driving, and self assessment of abilities	J. Huff, J. Stutts
DMV requirements and Medical Evaluation Program	S. Stewart, S. Creech
Education / Driver safety programs	B. Turner, S. Lafollette-Black
Transportation alternatives (NC DOT, CARE-LINE)	P. Bridgeman
Retiring from driving	S. Lafollette-Black, J. Stutts
Secondary level – Resources, Publications, etc.	All
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	H. Savage
Partner Coalition information and links	All
Interactive sections – questions, comments, contact us	TBD

**ATTACHMENT C**  
**Safe Driving Coalition Meeting – November 28, 2006**  
**Report on Mobility and Safe Driving Forums**

The Coalition conducted four Mobility and Safe Driving forums this year in the following geographic areas: Greensboro, Southern Pines, Waynesville and RTP.

Raleigh was our smallest forum (13) and Greensboro was our largest (28). We had a variety of participants at these forums- Safe Communities, traffic safety engineers, occupational therapists, police chief, law enforcement( county and city), Department of Social Services Medicaid transportation, Departments of Aging, transportation providers, planners, consumers, AARP Chapter members, NC DOT engineers, NCDMV, NCDAAS, AARP, AAA –Carolinas, NC Highway Safety Research Center, AAA-Triangle J, etc.

The biggest outcome from these forums was the networking and knowledge shared and learned to implement safe driving/mobility options and leveraging partnerships to share resources and information.

Special thanks goes to the mighty training team of NCDMV: Susan Stewart, Sherri Creech, Tracey Bucholz, Nadine Barnes; NCDAAS-Phyllis Bridgeman; Highway Safety Research Center- Dr. Jane Stutts; AAA-Carolinas-Sarah Davis with help from Jenny Womack and Joan Pellieter.